

III. REMARKS

1. Claims 1-15, 18-21, 23-28, 30 and 31 are amended. Claims 1-33 are currently pending in this application.

2. The claims have been amended to overcome the antecedent basis objections and the objections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Regarding the rejection of claim 4 for lacking antecedent basis for the limitation "said circuitry", the Applicant submits that the term "circuitry" was introduced in line 1 of claim 4 as originally filed. Thus, there is antecedent basis for the limitation "said circuitry" as recited in line 2 of claim 4.

With respect to the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph objection regarding claim 6 and the phrase "personal computer bus protocol", Applicant submits this language is definite. Examiner notes that such protocols change over time however, a person of ordinary skill in the art would know what the "personal computer bus protocol" is as this language is defined in the art at any given point in time regardless of any changes made to the communication standards. Thus, the phrase "personal computer bus protocol" is definite under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

3. The claims are amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 101.

4. Claims 1-5 and 8 are not anticipated by Debois, U.S. Patent No. 6,381,590, under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). Claim 1 recites a second storage in said device for storing information assigning said device to operate in an initial individual operation application environment. Claim 1 also recites a communications interface for changing said information so as to assign said device to a new

remotely located external application environment for servicing the device, the new application environment for servicing the device being different from the initial operational application environment. Debois does not disclose or suggest a storage in the meter for storing information assigning the meter to operate in a particular application environment. Nor does Debois disclose or suggest a communications interface for changing the information so as to assign the meter to a new remotely located external application environment that is different from the initial operational application environment as claimed in Applicant's claim 1.

Debois discloses a remote postage meter resetting system using a known postage meter (27) and having a prepaid postage user account and a line of credit database (57) (col. 3, lines 40-41; col. 4, lines 33-39; and col. 5, lines 38-41). The line of credit database (57) has a plurality of lines of credit corresponding to each of the prepaid postage accounts (col. 5, lines 41-43). The postage meter (27) has an ascending register, a descending register and a control sum register (the sum of ascending and descending registers) (col. 3, lines 54-61). During the resetting operation the postage meter CPU (35) provides the meter serial number to the data center computer (7) (col. 4, lines 52-56). If it is determined that there are insufficient funds in the user account to reset the meter (27), a check is performed to see if the user has a line of credit (col. 5, lines 34-43). If a line of credit exists, the meter reset is performed and the user is billed for the amount of the transaction for which credit was extended. If the user does not have a line of credit, the meter resetting operation is terminated (col. 5, lines 49-67).

Nowhere does Debois disclose or suggest a second storage for storing information assigning the meter to an initial individual operational application environment. The non-volatile memory (19) in Debois contains an ascending register, a descending register and a control sum register (col. 3, lines 54-61). The CPU (13, 35) in Debois operates in accordance with programming stored in a read-only memory (15) (col. 3, lines 61-64). There is no disclosure in Debois of any storage within the meter for storing information assigning the meter to operate in an initial individual operational application environment as called for in claim 1.

There is also no disclosure or suggestion in Debois of a communications interface for changing the information to assign the meter to a new remotely located external application environment that is different from the initial operational application environment as called for in claim 1. The communication interface (i.e. modem) (37) in Debois is disclosed as providing a communications means between the meter (27) and the data center computer (7) for the purpose of resetting a value of postage funds within the meter (27) (col. 4, lines 49-60). There is no other communication interface disclosed in Debois nonetheless a communication interface for changing information to assign the meter to a new remotely located external application environment as claimed in Applicant's claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is not anticipated by Debois.

Claims 2-5 and 8 are not anticipated by reason of their respective dependencies.

5. Claims 14-21, 24 and 31-31 are patentable over Debois under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claim 14 recites configuring the device to operate in said initial application environment and reallocating

said device ... for introduction to new application environments, the new application environments being different than the initial application environment. Debois does not disclose or suggest configuring the meter operate in an initial environment. Nor does Debois disclose or suggest reallocating the meter for introduction to new application environments as called for in claim 14 of the present application.

As described above, Debois discloses a remote postage meter resetting system using a known postage meter (27) and having a prepaid postage user account and a line of credit database (57) (col. 3, lines 40-41; col. 4, lines 33-39; and col. 5, lines 38-41). The postage funds within the meter (27) of Debois can be reset via a modem in communication with a data center computer (7) (col. 4, lines 52-56). The meter of Debois cannot be reprogrammed as the Examiner suggests. Programs can be added to meter memory only to further refine the postage fund resetting process (col. 6 lines 12-65). In Debois the added programs do not change the operating environment of the meter but rather give the user of the meter options regarding the use of funds in the users prepaid and line of credit accounts (col. 6, lines 18-22; col. 6, lines 34-42; and col. 6, lines 53-55). There is no disclosure or suggestion in Debois of configuring the meter to operate in an initial environment. Nor is there any disclosure or suggestion of reallocating the meter to operate in new environments as called for in claim 14. Thus, claim 14 is patentable over Debois.

Claim 15 is patentable over Debois for reasons similar to those above with regard to claim 14. Claims 16-21, 24 and 30-31 are patentable by reason of their respective dependencies.

Claims 6, 11-13, 22 and 27-29 are patentable over Debois in view of Gillieron, U.S. Patent No. 5,689,098 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claims 6 and 11-13 depend from claim 1, which is patentable over Debois for the reasons described above. Thus, claims 6 and 11-13 are patentable over Debois by reason of their respective dependencies.

Claim 1 is also patentable over Gillieron. Gillieron does not disclose or suggest the features recited by Applicant in claim 1 of the present application. Gillieron discloses a postal lock for a postage meter (see Abstract lines 3-22). Nowhere is it disclosed or suggested in Gillieron that the postage meter have a second storage in the meter for storing information assigning the meter to operate in an initial individual operational application environment. Nor does Gillieron disclose or suggest a communications interface for changing said information so as to assign said device to a new remotely located external application environment ... different from the initial operational application environment as recited in Applicant's claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over Gillieron. Claims 6 and 11-13 are patentable over Gillieron by reason of their respective dependencies.

Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over Debois in view of Gillieron, because Debois and/or Gillieron, individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the features recited in claim 1 of the present application. Thus, claims 6 and 11-13, which depend from claim 1, are patentable over Debois and/or Gillieron, individually or in combination, by reason of their respective dependencies.

Claims 22 and 27-29 depend from claim 15. For reasons similar to those described above for claim 1, claim 15 is patentable over Debois and/or Gillieron, individually or in combination. Thus,

claims 22 and 27-29 are patentable over Debois and/or Gillieron, individually or in combination.

Claims 9 and 25 are patentable over Debois in view of Allport et al., U.S. Pub. 2002/0046192 ("Allport"), under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and for the reasons described above is patentable over Debois by reason of its dependency.

Claim 1 is also patentable over Allport because Allport does not disclose or suggest the features of claim 1. Allport discloses linking a destination address of a mailpiece to the indicium printed on the mailpiece using a closed system meter (paragraph 0027). The closed system metering device is a mailing machine (100) that includes a processor (110), a scanner 120, a postage meter (150), and an envelope transport (140). Meter (150) includes a processor (152), non-volatile memory (154), storage means (156) and a digital printer (158) paragraph 0028). Nowhere does Allport disclose or suggest that the postage meter have a second storage in the meter for storing information assigning the meter to operate in an initial individual operational application environment. Nor does Allport disclose or suggest a communications interface for changing said information so as to assign said device to a new remotely located external application environment ... different from the initial operational application environment as recited in Applicant's claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over Allport. Claim 9 is patentable over Allport by reason of its respective dependency.

Because neither Debois nor Allport disclose or suggest the features as recited in Applicant's claim 1, their combination cannot as well. Claim 9 is patentable over Debois and/or Allport, individually or in combination, by reason of its dependency.

Claim 25, which depends from claim 15, is patentable over Debois and/or Allport, individually or in combination, for reasons similar to those described above for claims 1 and 9.

Claims 7, 10, 23 and 26 are patentable over Debois in view of Pierce et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,151,591 ("Pierce"), under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claims 7 and 10 depend from claim 1 and for the reasons described above are patentable over Debois by reason of their dependencies.

Claim 1 is also patentable over Pierce because Pierce does not disclose or suggest the features of claim 1. Pierce discloses a Network PC Metering System (an open system) (10) that includes a plurality of Client PCs (20) conventionally coupled to a Network Server (30). Each PSD (40) of Network PC Metering System (10) is coupled to one of Client PCs (20). Each Client PC includes a conventional personal computer system with display, keyboard, and an unsecured printer (22). In Pierce, a plurality of PSDs exists in Network PC Metering System (10), with at least one PSD (40) being coupled to several Client PCs (20). When a specific PSD (40) is accessed for a metering transaction, Client PC (20), to which the PSD (40) is attached, becomes a Meter Server PC (21) (shown within parenthesis) for the remainder of the transaction. When the PSD (40) is being accessed by the Client PC 20 to which the PSD is coupled the Client PC (20) is functioning as a stand-alone PC meter (col. 5, lines 14-39). Nowhere is it disclosed or suggested in Pierce that the postage meter have a second storage in the meter for storing information assigning the meter to operate in an initial individual operational application environment. Nor does Pierce disclose or suggest a communications interface for changing said information so as to assign said device to a new remotely located external application

environment ... different from the initial operational application environment as recited in Applicant's claim 1. The postage meters in Pierce operate only with the PC they are coupled to. Thus, claim 1 is patentable over Pierce. Claims 7 and 10 are patentable over Pierce by reason of their dependencies.

Because neither Debois nor Pierce, disclose the features of Applicant's claim 1 their combination cannot as well. Thus, Claims 7 and 10 are patentable over Debois and/or Pierce, individually or in combination.

Claims 23 and 26, which depend from claim 15, are patentable over Debois and/or Pierce, individually or in combination, for reasons similar to those described above for claims 1, 7 and 10.

Claims 32 and 33 are patentable over Debois in view of Lee et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,590,198 ("Lee"), under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claims 32 and 33 depend from claim 15, which, for the reasons described above, is patentable over Debois. Thus, claims 32 and 33 are patentable over Debois by reason of their respective dependencies.

Claim 15 is patentable over Lee as Lee fails to disclose or suggest the features of claim 15. Lee discloses an open system PC-based postage meter (10) that uses a super password vault access when a user password is forgotten (see Abstract and col. 3, line 53 - col. 4, line 4). Nowhere does Lee disclose or suggest configuring the meter to operate in an initial application environment or reallocating the meter for introduction to new application environments as called for in Applicant's claim 15. Thus, claim 15 is patentable over Lee. Claims 32 and 33 are patentable over Lee by reason of their respective dependencies.

Because neither Debois nor Lee disclose or suggest the features of Applicant's claim 15 their combination cannot as well. Thus claims 32 and 33 are patentable over Debois and/or Lee, individually or in combination, by reason of their respective dependencies.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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